

MCGILL DAILY CULTURE

Volume 80, Number 57

What do you think we are? Chopped liver? Since 1911.

Thursday, January 24, 1991

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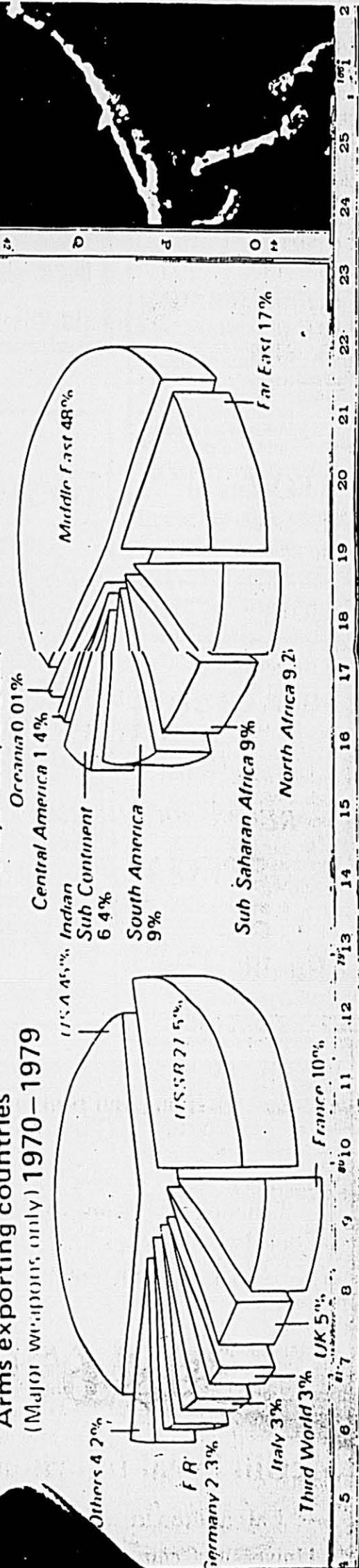
DON'T BELIEVE
THE HYPE.

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Third World arms-importing regions 1970-1979

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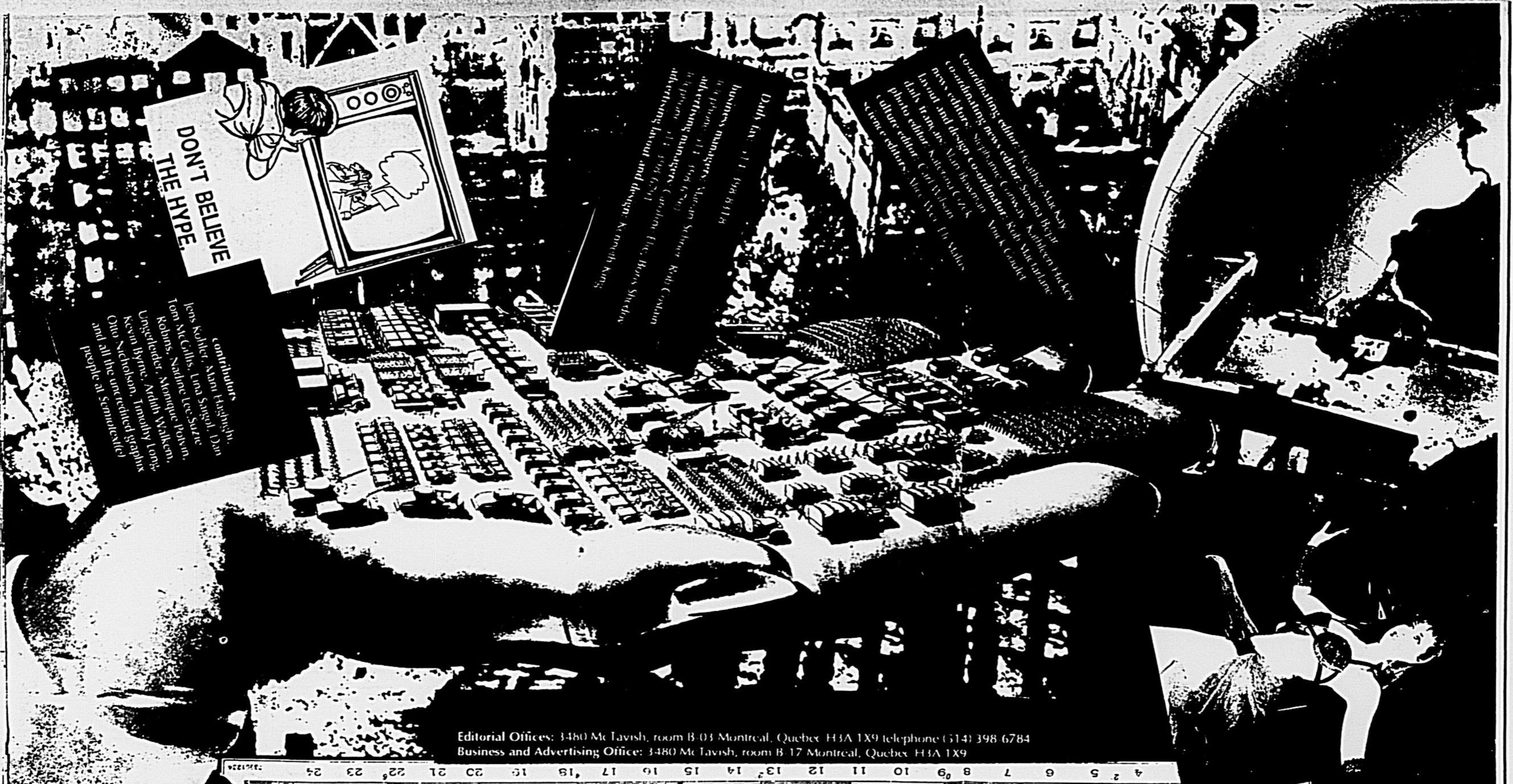
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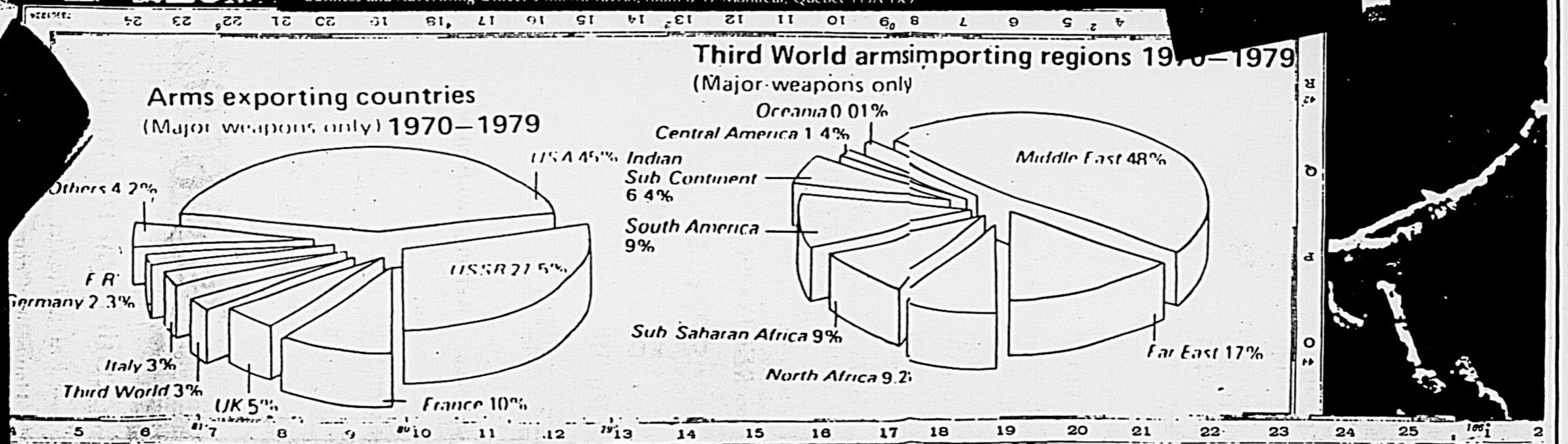
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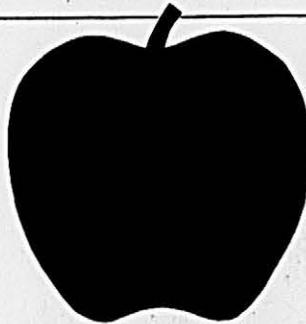
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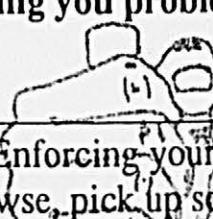


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"The always-likable Ms. Field sees her baby home safe from the evil clutches of Persian fiends in this rousing rally." - *Stars and Stripes Review* circa. 1776.

Sally: "Not without George Bush!"

Not Without My Daughter
directed by Brian Gilbert
MGM/UA, 1991

Not long ago, movie audiences were both fascinated and horrified when the heroine of *Alien* fought fiercely to protect a child from an evil monster on another planet. But the maternal instinct prevailed against all evils.

This month, director Brian Gilbert has turned audience attention back to the maternal theme in *Not Without My Daughter*. This time, however, the vile enemy is not an alien monster - it is Iran.

Alien's tough Sigourney Weaver has been replaced with an all-American Sally Field in the role of housewife *cum* fugitive, Betty Mahmoody. Based on a true story, the nightmare begins for Betty when her husband persuades her to accompany him to his homeland, Iran, with their daughter, Mahtob.

Once there, his fanatically religious family persuades him to stay on indefinitely, and to keep his wife and daughter with him against their will.

Betty soon discovers that under Iranian laws, she is unable to divorce her husband without forfeiting custody of her daughter. She is forced to stay with him, suffering incarceration and beatings before she and her child can pull off a well-executed if inevitable escape.

The story is undoubtedly a compelling one. The circumstances of Betty Mahmoody's life would seem irresistible to any director. However, Gilbert has taken the horror of *Alien* and transposed it onto a nation. This kind of filmmaking can only foster fear, misunderstanding, and hate among North American audiences.

Brian Gilbert has created a piece of propaganda, made all the more powerful and damaging by his excellent directing. Field (*Norma Rae*) and, particularly, Alfred Molina (*Prick up Your Ears*) give stunningly convincing performances as spouses who are suddenly strangers.

Gilbert subjects his audience to exactly the culture shock the real Betty must have experienced in 1984.

Where Gilbert goes astray is in his irresponsible depiction of a whole country of human beings.

Gilbert says in the press release, "Even though I didn't know the culture of Iran, I felt I had an instinct for what was going on." In effect, he made no attempt with this film to understand the Iranian perspective.

What MGM's press release neglected to mention was that *Not Without My Daughter* was filmed on location in Israel, where an understanding and empathy for Islam would not be optimal, to say the least.

The final scene of *Not Without My Daughter* sums up nicely what the rest of the film achieves. Betty and her daughter are dropped off by well-meaning subversives at the door to the American Embassy in Turkey.

As the sun begins to rise over the building, the American flag appears, waving expansively across the screen to the moving sounds of the Jerry Goldsmith (*Alien*, *The Omen*) soundtrack. Sally Field's face glows and she says "We're home, baby."

Unlike *Alien*, however, the monster has not been eradicated. An evil nation of Iranians still lurks in the distance.

In times of war, propaganda can be expected. As far as propaganda goes, this is top-notch stuff. It is dramatic, exciting, and well-written. All it lacks is an introductory rallying cry from George Bush himself.

- Tom McGillivray

Anti-Arab media show a one-sided war

by Lina Saigol

The false dream of the journalist's 'unbiased truth' is most transparent in times of war.

Every civilian in the past week has developed an almost perverse addiction to the news that graces our screens and front pages. But what we are seeing here in North America gives only one side - the pro-American, pro-Israeli side.

True enough, the enforcement of strict military censorship is limiting reporters a great deal, but all this does is help reporters to home in solely on the American, Jewish and Israeli profiles, leaving, as usual, the Arabs on the sidelines.

Brendan Weston, news editor at the *Montreal Mirror*, agrees that this is nothing but, "Horrible press coverage, which is undoubtedly biased." He explains, "There always has been a bias because editors here presume that the Montreal Jewish community is monolithically supporting Israel."

He attributes the prejudice to sheer laziness on the part of reporters who haven't bothered to investigate further the monstrosities that the Israelis and Americans have in their time also inflicted on the innocent (such as the people of South Lebanon). Weston concluded, "It is much easier for the media not to challenge those who are pro-Israeli."

David Walker, foreign editor for the *Montreal Gazette*, admits that the media have "been over-involved in the technical aspects of the war," and have overlooked the human suffering that is going on among the allies and the enemy.

While this is unavoidable, it is also the wish of Bush and Shamir. These leaders are afraid to undermine civilian support by reminding

people of Vietnam and the Holocaust. Bush has labelled the war "Operation Desert Storm" in order to maximize the sanitization.

Walker says, "This is making the war seem unreal for many." He plans to run several articles on what will happen after the war, mainly with respect to finding a solution for the Palestinian-Israeli issue.

The media seem to have overlooked this aspect - once again, to keep things clean, following Bush's hypocrisy. Perhaps if the U.S. had intervened earlier during the Intifada, and addressed the issue, Israel would not have been such an easy pawn for President Hussein. Meanwhile, the West is receiving

warped, shocking images of Arabs, which is resulting in a racist backlash.

(For example, BBC radio in Britain has selected "Walk like an Egyptian" as one of more than a dozen songs currently too 'sensitive' to allow on the air.)

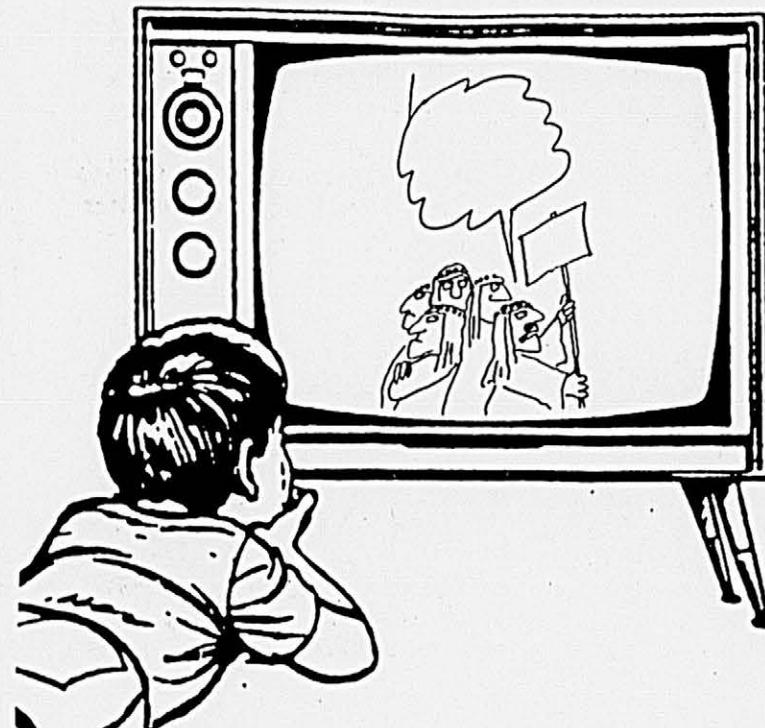
While the American soldiers are gracing our television screens in a clean-cut, rayban-clad, gum-chewing image, the Arabs are depicted as illiterate and filthy.

If one was to weigh this image with the truth, it would read something like this: Most Arabs can communicate in English. Few Americans (none visible in the media) can speak Arabic.

The Arabs address the leader of the United States as 'President Bush'. The Americans address the Iraqi leader as 'Saddam', which contrary to Western belief is incorrect. In fact, Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister would not accept Bush's letter on the grounds that it was "Rude in its use of language and inappropriate to diplomatic communication."

Does the refusal to look at both sides reflect on the media or on what the public wants to see? Perhaps if one were to focus on the human aspect of this war, empathy to all sides would be a natural reaction. The Arabs come from 22 nations. They see themselves as one people and one land. Just as Israel sees itself as part and parcel of America.

Fair enough that no one has real reason for a pro-Hussein stance, but is it really news that not all Arabs are Saddam Husseins? "Ask no questions and we'll tell you lies anyway," seems to be the philosophy of the mainstream media at the moment.



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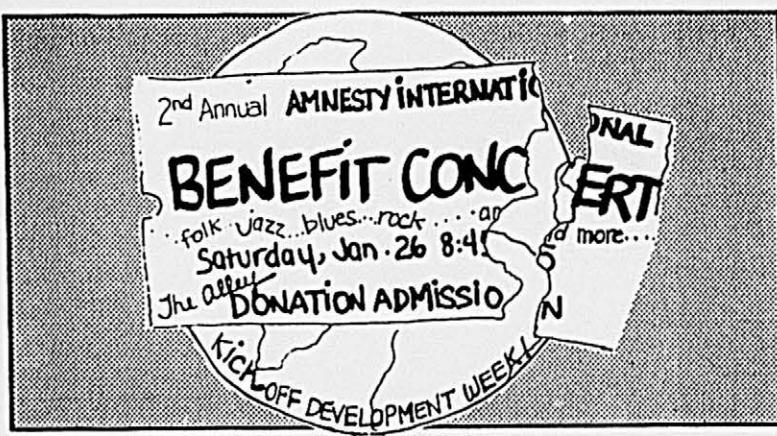
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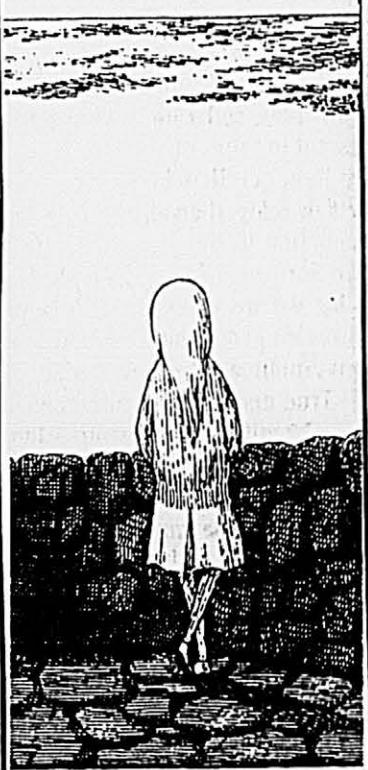
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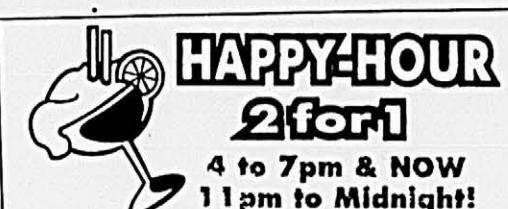
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Thursday, January 24, 1991

Propaganda prepared the west for war

by Michael Boyce

Demonizing the enemy. A favourite sport.

Americans fight for God and country, and it is considered honourable. Iraqis fight for the same things, and it is considered evil. But it is not just Iraqis - for the enemy has been generalized to include all Arabs, whether they're Iraqis, Iranians, Jordanians, or Saudis.

And the total threat has been marshalled under the label of 'Islam' - always fundamentalist, always fanatical.

This isn't simply the result of the current conflict in the Gulf. It has a history which extends as far back as the Crusades and Columbus.

As McGill professor Tom Naylor told the *Daily*, the established trade routes of the East were challenged by the new routes to the West. The expansion was sanctioned by rhetoric grounded in Christian ideology and the mission to spread the True Word. The current war in the Gulf is justified through the rhetoric of democratic ideology and human rights.

But this is not simply a contention of belief systems and a strug-

gle for economic dominion, for this agenda is mandated and given credence on the basis of a sweeping personal characterization, imbuing all representatives of a culture with the same fundamental and innate behaviour.

The effect of this stereotyping is obvious. To kill your enemy, it is believed you must hate them, and if differentiation and contradiction get in the way of hate, then all who look like your enemy will be hated. And this hate is generated and, more importantly, disseminated through systems of mass media communications.

All forms of communication always have in their hands the potential for mass mobilization and deployment of propaganda. And in the logic of difference based on 'otherness', propaganda produces its other in anti-propaganda. This has been achieved not just by way of statement of fact, but more insidiously through a representative aesthetic.

Those familiar with the Western cultural milieu of 'entertainment' can recognize, identify and articulate the negative stereotype of Arab

people. Cartoons (animated and the newsprint 'political' variety), movies, television shows, comic books and music all contain examples.

Even to the extent that a film like - say - *The Sheik* (a silent film starring the great 'Latin' lover Rudolph Valentino) exoticizes and romanticizes, it is still on the basis of danger and unpredictable passion.

I remember an animated Popeye cartoon produced by the Fleischer Brothers' studio in the mid 1930s that featured Popeye's arch nemesis Brutus (or Bluto, if you prefer) as the barbaric Abu Hussein and his band of thieves. The thieves moved with blinding speed, stealing everything, from food and money to one man's gold teeth.

'Hell-bent Arabs'

More recently, and less 'funny', Batman's arch-nemesis the Joker was selling American nuclear weaponry to hell-bent-on-destruction Arab terrorists (some heads of state would have us believe these words are synonymous).

The propaganda has been ac-

celerating ever since the 'OPEC oil crisis', misrepresented as the result of sheikdom's greed. It perhaps reached its pre-Gulf war peak during the 'Iranian hostage crisis', during which the nature of the Iranian revolution and the history of American puppet governments in the area was distorted and compressed into a countdown on the comforts of a handful of unlucky Western hostages.

Campaigns against anti-Arab racism by North American-Arabian activists have fallen mostly on deaf white ears.

When Arab-Americans lobbied against the popular Cure song 'Killing an Arab,' for example, the precious band members explained the song was really about the episode in Camus's *L'Etranger* in which the protagonist 'absurdly' murders a sleeping Arab. Camus's own implicit exploitation of rabid anti-Arab racism in France went unexamined.

Similarly, it took a vociferous lobbying effort a few years ago for an Arab group to force the withdrawal of a new G.I. Joe set, activist Rachad Antonius said. The di-

minutive plastic hero had been outfitted with desert gear and a gang of Arab 'terrorists' for children to enjoy knocking off by proxy.

Back in modern day Canada, the TV news delivers vague reports of an increase in anti-Arab racism. Two unidentified men speaking Arabic in a Montréal metro were harassed by a group of whites.

In Calgary, 'Arab' children were harassed in schools and death threats have been made to Palestinian sympathizers critical of the U.S.A.'s motives in the Gulf. Most recently, CSIS has been rounding up Arabs in Canadian cities for witch-hunt conspiracy questioning.

In the U.S., reports of aggression against people of Arab descent have increased. Some right-wing politicians are discussing the viability of internment camps. It could get worse - Arabs are an easy scapegoat.

Regardless of the specific case of Saddam Hussein - or of George Bush for that matter - what an Iraqi, an Arab, a American or a Canadian 'really' is should always be an open question.

Thanks to Rachad Antonius and Tom Naylor for their observations.

'A for P'

by Monique Potvin

The House of Commons has now endorsed the active participation of Canadian troops in the Gulf War. Moves such as this inspire many peace organizations, including Montréal's Artists for Peace, to renew their activist efforts.

Artists for Peace was originally founded by Gilles Vignault in March of 1983, during the nuclear build-up in the United States under Ronald Reagan. Membership now exceeds 900 members, including musicians, artists, filmmakers and dancers.

Martin Duckworth, a documentary filmmaker and a member of Artists for Peace, believes Canada has no place in the Gulf War. "It is an attempt by Brian Mulroney to become another George Bush. Mulroney wants to copy whatever George Bush is doing," he said.

For his part, Brian Mulroney exclaimed in the House of Commons on Tuesday: "Canada is defending the cause of a future peace." Interesting methods, Brian.

Artists for Peace have supported the Inuit of Labrador and their fight against the development of the NATO base in Goose Bay for low-flying aircraft. The group was also active in supporting the Mohawks at Oka and Kanawake. Now they are protesting the Mulroney government's involvement in the Persian Gulf.

Artists for Peace were among the 6000 people who participated in a march January 13, on René Levesque Boulevard. The next major peace march is scheduled for this Saturday at 13h, leaving from Parc Lafontaine. Artists for Peace are hoping "all of Montréal shows up."



day's show. The students appearing in the festival, who took time out to chat in the wee hours, look first to left-foot-right-foot before extrapolating into the mind world of cross-cultural exchange.

"Have I begun to understand the culture of Arabic dance?" one performer pondered, "I cannot say. Each class is like a party."

"Oh...and three years ago I went with Aziza to Tunisia."

Perhaps she would have landed herself in the town of Tunis independently, but perhaps not.

The classes at the ballet school, like the festival *in toto*, slap down the currency of some common community and the dancers feel good for an hour or two.

But feeling isn't just another word for nothin' left to lose. You have to learn the steps. "We're like a community, and our starting point

is dance. And when we dance, we are like we are singing," Aziza said.

The middle section - the dance section - of the North African festival has dropped into the doldrums of history. But the music continues at Balattou.

And the classes at Le Ballet Aziza continue *ad infinitum*.

Aures play Algerian Rai at Club Balattou January 29 and 30, 4362 St. Laurent, phone 499-9239.

Passport to the middle...

by Heather MacKay

When you get to the middle of most things in Québec, they turn Québécois.

As one of the very few cultural groups in the province diminishing in number, the Québécois have gripped pluralism by the toes, danced around it all smiles, then shined the whole conflux up like some naturalized navel jewel.

Or at least the dancers among us have. The first Festival of North African Folk Music has installed itself this month at Club Balattou.

Over three weeks, Balattou is presenting music, dance, and then music again. The *Daily*, being the *Daily*, missed the first of the festival's three parts. But we caught the second - or the middle, so to speak.

Aziza Roy came to Montréal 14 years ago, after choreographing pockets of people in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. In 1982 she founded Le Ballet Aziza here in Montréal, teaching dance from her home country of Tunisia together with dance from Egypt.

The music and dance spin the stories of rural women living and working in farming communities back in the countries where the dance was born.

The 80 or so students in Aziza's school are all from Québec, a statistic that computes beautifully with Aziza's program of toe-tap travel.

"Dance is my passport. It's an exchange," Aziza said after Tues-

DAILY PHOTO: NADINE LEE

Fuck work before it fucks you

The New York based Semiotext(e)/Autonomedia publishing project is immediately distinguishable from the arid or at best self-centred mass of late-century cultural thought, though it shares many of the theoretical concerns that fill more academic journals.

by Susana Béjar and Carl Wilson

The pages of Semiotext(e) magazine, each issue radically unlike the last, tend more towards explosions of experimentation, manipulating the debris of culture and politics with ruthless wit and near-crazed enthusiasm. Its list of contributors through the years includes the biggest names in high-tone sociology, anthropology and criticism, but also gathers together comic-book artists, conspiracy theorists and really bad poets.

The Autonomedia imprimatur rides the backs of little black "Foreign Agents" books, which carry the matter in Semiotext(e) to further, or at least longer-winded, extremes.

Semiotext(e)/Autonomedia co-editor and publisher Jim Fleming is in Montréal this week thanks to Ficciones bookstore, Oboro art gallery and McGill Comparative Literature professor Brian Massumi (whose own course offerings have included a class on masochism).

Fleming will be speaking tonight at Oboro on The End(s) of Communism(s), the End(s) of Capitalism(s), a title he says he chose only for its parenthetical syllabification. But first he dropped by the Daily for an extended interview.

Daily: How much does Semiotext(e) publish?

Jim Fleming: We'll probably do 20 projects altogether under both imprints this year. Last year we did 12.

The last Semiotext(e) we saw was the Science Fiction issue...

That's the last one that actually saw the light of day. The next one will be a Soviet issue, and it's near-finished. It's also conceivable an issue on architecture might be out before the Soviet issue. And then there are four or five other issues in various stages of preparation, including an issue about Canada.

Why a Canadian issue?

It happened because we've accidentally been doing a series of issues on national cultures, and the ques-

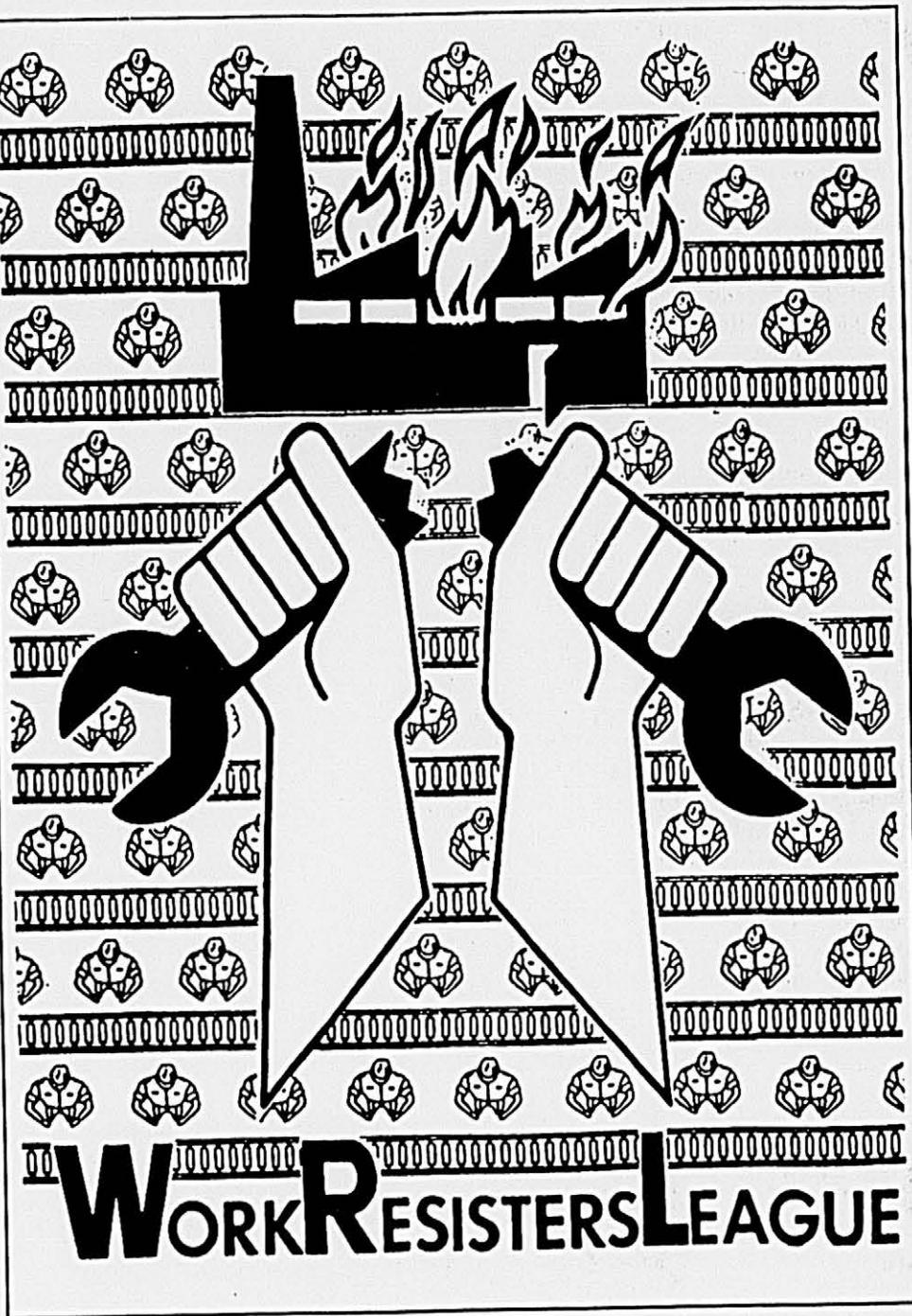
tion of nationhood has been posed very interestingly about Canada.

There's been an Italy issue, a German one and a 'U.S.A.' issue that falls into this track, with a Soviet issue, a Latin American issue and a Japanese issue in preparation.

So there's a lot of them lining up that way, and as much as they resemble one another, it's by discussing extra-parliamentary questions and underground or vanguard culture, and that's what we'll do with the Canadian issue, or at least that's what we'll start with. It's hard to say ahead of time what we'll get, because we hope to be surprised.

The McGill library has a tiny, scattered collection of bits of Semiotext(e) thru the years, and it certainly seems that the first couple that they have are much more solidly academic and addressed to a different audience than the most recent issues. How long have you been involved?

I got involved in 1979, and the journal began in '73 or maybe '74 with a group of people at Columbia University. I suppose there was a collective of five or six at the very



The whole focus shifted because rather than representing some kind of alternative in academic styles we thought we would move into a place of real practice.

And of course many things have changed in the world of theory as well since that time. In the early 70s structuralism was a going thing, semiotics felt like a cutting-edge approach to more disciplinary questions. Nobody's concerned with those questions quite so centrally now, and that's a good thing.

The change was deliberate, then.

The change was to say, "Fuck it, we don't want to be an academic journal." Even if we want to represent alternatives in

theory, we want to do the stuff instead, to practice what we were preaching.

So have you gotten any signal that you're reaching beyond an academic audience?

We get periodic inquiries from various police forces. After the Italy issue we got a visit from a lawyer who worked for the Italian Supreme

Court, who came unannounced to the office and wanted to know if we were all in jail yet, only to discover that we were operating with impunity. He seemed to think that any state ideology apparatus worth its salt would have been on our case long ago.

You're talking about Semiotext(e)'s "activist" nature - activism to what ends?

Well, speaking for myself I'd say one of the major strains is around the question of work: its refusal or its abolition is part of the project.

The left has traditionally been blind to lots of these questions, thinking for at least the better part of this century that the struggles were over ownership of the means of production or increasing wage scales or salary questions. From the perspective we've developed, those goals seem suicidal.

Are you trying to present visions of a society to move towards or simply to disrupt our vision of society as it is?

We don't want to offer visions of ways we should go. The vision

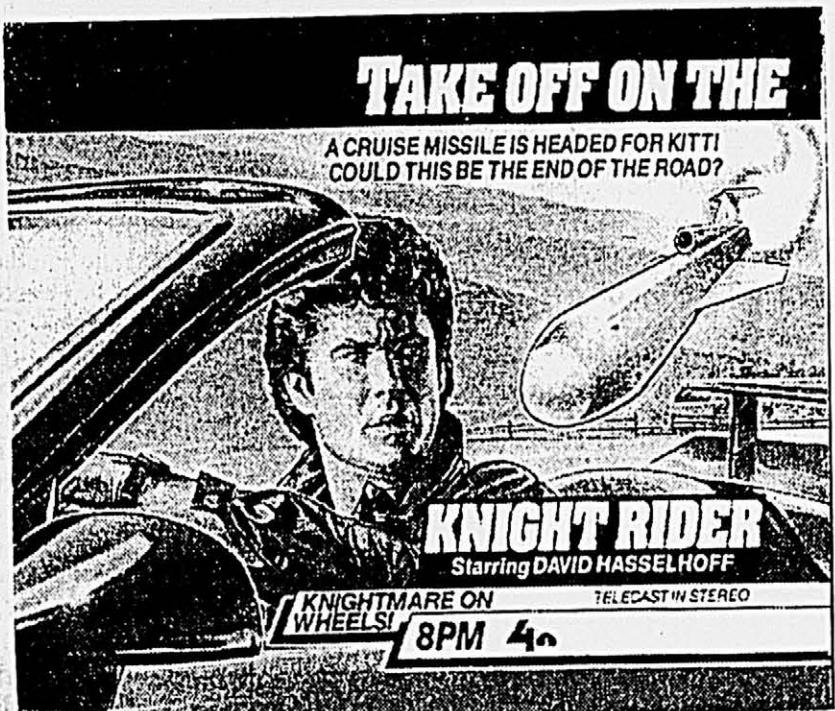
comes of itself, and we don't want to represent somebody's struggle, because we don't know what they want.

Part of the politics of representation is to say everybody's project has to be defined uniquely. Whatever you want we can't define collectively; but we can certainly say what's wrong with the way many lives are lived now, particularly of our own, and if there is a common denominator that defines the struggles let it be something that at least plays with the notion of work.

This is not much to enshrine the working class, which is an older way of trying to play the same dynamic, the hagiography of labour. The experience of working classes in so-called "real existing socialist countries" have gone so because the working class is being enshrined, preserved and eternalized, rather than abolished, for reasons that should be apparent to anybody who looks.

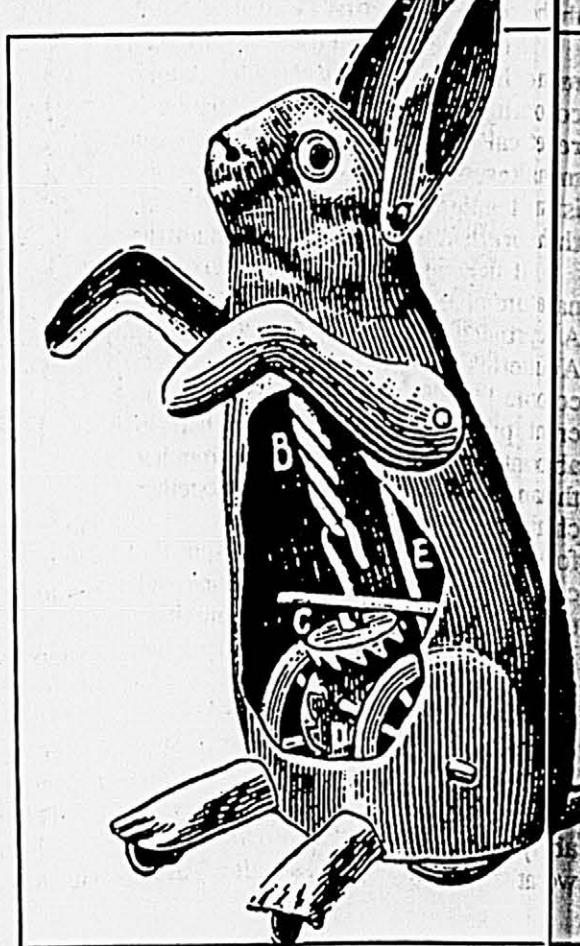
There's always a way in which hierarchies get elaborated by somebody whose vision of what society should be like is closer to realization than somebody else's. So definitely liberation can be a very egocentric task. Anybody who needs somebody else to tell them how to live their life is in trouble, and anybody who presumes to tell somebody else how to live their life is also in trouble.

So how in a culture that, first has work built into it as the assumption of common sense and



start. The group never looked as though it would be a stable group from issue to issue. Sylvie [Lottinger, Fleming's co-editor] is the only continuous thread from the actual beginnings.

But this change from abstruse academic considerations to a more popular cultural style is something I can't take primary responsibility for.



second, forces people to build their self-images around their work can you represent these ideas without being alienating? I don't think it's easy, and I don't think the struggle to abolish work is formula where all the answers are found... For reasonably affluent First World people to say "Fuck Work" so often mean, "Let the Third World do our labour for us."

And in fact that seems to be part of the strategy that's been employed in the post-war period: the job of the first World will be the job of consumption, and the nasty, dirty work of production will be increasingly relegated to the new world proletariat. So Taiwanese women will spend

What role do fantasy and humour play in Semiotext(e)?

I think if there's any theoretical project at all, that's what it's got to be. We're not martyrs for a cause, we're not working for the revolution. We're at play. And we try to make sure we're having a lot of fun. Zero work doesn't mean inactivity. Sometimes things are very strenuous, sometimes arguments are exceedingly heated, sometimes blood is drawn. We try to do something like a barroom brawl in print.

But this sense of liveliness, I hope, seldom feels like it's mediated by power plays around local hierarchies. The project feels generally too interesting to produce the factionalism that comes of boredom. The factions

group that operates like that at all. Nearly everybody does the shitwork of an issue or whatever the project might be, so it's not like there's a secretarial staff at the beck and call of the senior editors or anything like that.

Everybody boxes books up and sends them to the post office. There's no division of labour around something like white collar, pink collar, blue collar. There are no employees, and I think there will never be any employees, no matter how large it might get.

Do you get funded by Columbia?

No. The New York State Council on the Arts gives us money periodically but sometimes they don't, depending on what we do. We've got a number of nice letters in the files that say, 'Frankly, some members of the awarding committee found it a little too hard to take.'

And we're just now applying for the first time to some private foundations for money for some individual projects. But... in these current debates about censorship and state sponsorship of arts, I guess our position is, get it if you can but don't feel like it's owed you. To take money from the state doesn't feel to me like any purer political gesture than getting money from some private corporation.

We succeed mostly because we all work for free, which is just a kind of structural necessity... so the money we generate goes to the next project.

And that's enough to get by?

Yeah, we seem to be growing at a pretty good clip with that. If we had to actually pay people, it'd be different. And there's another question around access to refusal of work.

Most of us live lives that are comfortable enough that we have the opportunity to do this kind of thing, and if we were, say, single parents with three kids we wouldn't necessarily...

How does that affect the diversity of the collective?

If you define people in this liberal mantra of race-sex-class, most of the people who are women or non-white have for us worked on projects that are around race-sex-class-bookson feminism and sexual definition, books on the Third World.

We're actually trying not to use those categories so much, not because they're ineffectual categories but because they often feel like categories that have been in some measure co-opted. The achievements are local and real in some people's lives, but that probably is primarily a strategy of integration.

...In political conjunctions where there's a social push to integrate formerly excluded groups - Blacks, gays, women, whatever it



might be - there's a temptation for those long-disenfranchised groups to feel they can work better from inside, or that if they

I guess I'm trying to represent a drop-out tendency rather than a tendency of the integration into the workplace of disparate groups, which may have the effect of simply homogenizing the face of capital.

How much does that ethic of dropping out actually function day to day at Semiotext(e)? Is it a social scene?

Yeah. It's primarily a group of friends. And most of these people operate at the margins... These are not execs, and with really just one or two exceptions they're not at the university either. I'm a part-time university person, Sylvère's a full-time university person, but everybody else isn't connected to universities in any way, not even as students.

GOD BLESS MONEY

YOU KNOW, IF JESUS WERE HERE TODAY HE'D BE BULLISH ON AMERICA. HE'D WEAR A 3-PIECE SUIT & WORK OUT AT THE HEALTH CLUB.

One's an artist, other people just work part-time jobs of very 'moral' types... It's a

little of everything. We're the lumpen-yuppeteria.

their lives in factories and First World people will have the job of watching television. All of which can be equally governed by the work relation. No one's paid to watch television, but the labour in the social factory since the Keynesian revolution has involved consumption equally as much as production.

Leisure is a mediated position, the point of the day where the reproduction of the work relation is organized.

Leisure time simply means preparing to work again, just as the reproduction of the family is producing labourers, paid or unpaid, for the family, the home, the factory, the school...

So how do you methodologically, coming from a theoretical background, make something that isn't going to be a theoretical work?

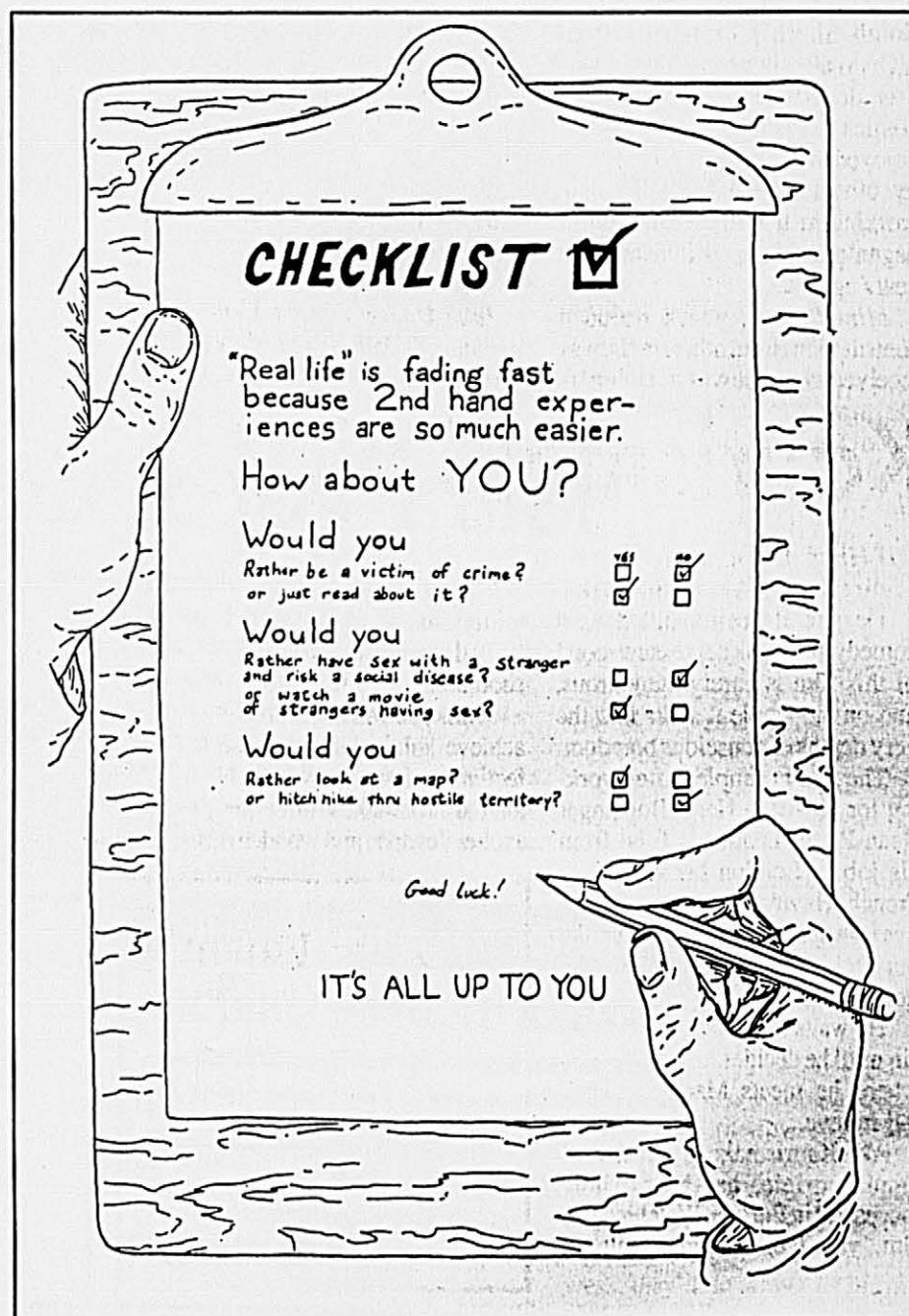
It depends on the nature of the project. A project about Latin America I certainly come to with different presuppositions about what's central than if it's about architecture. It's hard for me to say there's a common denominator, or mutually intelligible concept that governs both these issues and lets them become transparent to one another.

You operate in good faith and try to be as afraid of the pitfalls as you can be... In many respects, it's probably no different from being a weatherman.



solved, but some people stay and I was just one who did.

There've been a number of smart rich kids at Columbia who show up thinking it's got some cache or something and imagine they're going to do a lot of very fancy thinking over tea, and it's not an editorial



Plotting for \$ in the morbid comix biz

by Kevin Byrne

If you were seeking escape from an increasingly horrific world, comic books might seem like a good place to turn. Julie Doucet's *Dirty Plotte*, however, will offer you no such comfort.

Doucet's intricately drawn panels deal with mainly autobiographical material ranging from the safe world of the artist's cats to the more self-reflexive work concerning menstruation and overflowing tampons - Doucet's period pieces.

The second (and latest) edition of her quarterly comic takes on a more dark and disturbing tone. Self-mutilation, cannibalism, breast cancer and blow jobs administered by snakes are amongst the miscellany spewed forth from the twisted cornucopia that is Doucet's psyche.

We sat together in a St-Laurent happy hour hellhole, and I scanned her work while an uncomfortable silence prevailed. The inevitable question arose: "Did anything, uh, bad... perhaps violent happen to you as a child?"

"No... but... I dunno... I have maybe too much imagination," she said.

Doucet, who grew up in St-Lambert ("the Outremont of the South Shore") dropped out of UQAM after three years in the fine arts department. Deciding that comics were the medium she most enjoyed working in, and inspired by others around her who were working in that art form, Doucet began publishing a 'fanzine' five years ago.

Mini Plotte, which included contributions from other artists, was received well but was a com-

mercial failure, financed by Doucet and credit earned at a downtown photocopy service.

Said Doucet, "It's hard to meet with these people who have for a long time been working in underground comics... And they're telling me that there is no money and they are so pessimistic."

Still, the comics industry is inundated with shit, dominated by the "power-fantasy wet dreams" aimed at adolescent boys. Yet Julie Doucet seems comfortable in the medium, receiving the support of such well-respected artists as Chester Brown (*Yummy Fur*).

Brown acted as go-between for Doucet in some of her earlier bids to be published regularly in book form. Nevertheless, Fantagraphics turned her down, citing lack of funds as their flimsy and predictable excuse. Doucet's major break came when Chris Oliveros of Montréal's *Drawn & Quarterly* offered Doucet her own book last spring.

"Chris has a reputation as being a very special publisher. He's an angel... very generous, *et cetera*," Doucet said.

In an industry with an ever-dwindling buying public and troubled by publishers who sometimes don't pay at all, such backing from honest and supportive publishers is welcome. Also welcome is the \$10 000 grant Doucet has recently received from le Ministre des affaires culturelles du Québec.

Perhaps the exposure and the extra cash will slow the torrent of self-mutilation fantasies?

Julie Doucet's *Dirty Plotte* is available at Marché du Livres on Berri, or at Nova on Ste. Catherine.



Kaurismaki hired a cinematic joy-killer

I Hired A Contract Killer

directed by Aki Kaurismaki
Despite its being billed as a comedy, the bleak depressing mood of this film is barely humourous, and on the whole it sinks into the very depths of conscious boredom.

The plot is simple. After working for 15 years, Henri Boulanger (Jean-Pierre Léaud) is fired from his job in London because he is French. Having no friends or relatives, he decides to commit suicide, but decides he is too 'yellow'. So he hires a contract killer.

He waits at home for the assassin until he decides to go to the pub where he meets Margaret. They fall in love...

Aki Kaurismaki, a director of Finnish origin, has been wildly successful in Europe. Watching this film, you feel the huge cultural

chasm between the Old and New World. The style is decidedly minimalist. Those vaguely distracted by the films of Jim Jarmusch should stay away from Kaurismaki.

Unlike Jarmusch, who is able to achieve subtly humorous and effective performances from his actors, Kaurismaki's direction only evokes deadpan and wooden acting.

Laughter in this film does not come from the humour of the jokes, but their stupidity.

At one point Margaret urges Henri to leave the country with her. He asks if she will miss England. "The working class has no fatherland," she responds in her bright red bathrobe. A line like this points to the larger problem with *I Hired a*

Contract Killer. It is far too bland and stupid to be taken seriously, and far too serious and boring to be humorous.

This is surprising considering Jean-Pierre Léaud is playing the lead. Léaud was Maria Schneider's filmmaking boyfriend in Bertolucci's *The Last Tango in Paris*. Usually a vibrant and ener-

getic actor, he has been reduced to a low key performance in a mediocre movie.

If only Jarmusch had directed...
I Hired a Contract Killer begins February 1 at Famous Player's Theatres. In English with French subtitles.

— Otto Nicholson



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Compton's drums not culturally tainted

by Ardit Walkem

It was a novel idea for CBC - having First Nations people identify their own issues and tell their own stories.

On Sunday night CBC aired *Drums*, a two hour program hosted and compiled by Ojibway journalist Jim Compton.

The objective of *Drums* was to provide a broad look at contemporary First Nations people in 'Canada'. This was done through a collage of approximately fifteen short pieces on different elements of First Nations societies. Reporters involved in covering the stories were themselves all First Nations.

Drums represents a radical change in coverage of First Nations issues for CBC. The network's last major effort was the made-for-television movie *Where the Spirit Lives*, a show written, produced and directed by white people.

Where the Spirit Lives was blasted by First Nations commu-

nities who said it minimized the pain inflicted at residential schools, as well as its cultural inaccuracies and stereotypes.

Drums touched on a lot of issues: NATO low-level flights over Innu territory, the James Bay II Hydro project, trapping rights, urban poverty, residential schools and the summer events at Oka. Compton emphasized that the unifying element in the series is the idea of culture as a strong political force.

"White people have always had a benign awareness of our culture. They bought the crafts and had an image of the Hollywood Indian...they didn't realize the powerful political element of culture."

A segment focussing on the First Nations community in downtown Regina opens with a shot of graffiti which reads: "Where are our Warriors?"

There is an interview with a cop who talks of catching a four year

old boy doing a B&E because "I haven't ate nothing for four days." Other youths tell of white gangs who 'hunt' for First Nations people and badly beat any people they find alone.

In retaliation, First Nations youth in Regina have started a process of "wagon burning." As a young boy explains, "we find victims, and we victimize them."

Jim Sinclair, a First Nations activist, calls First Nations-Canadian relations a "time bomb," referring to the conditions of poverty and violence that are reflected in urban centers across Canada.

Drums presents portraits of Nations which are changing and growing stronger through increased cultural awareness. People who are fighting back by refusing to accept continued stereotyping and marginalization within 'Canadian' society.

One of the most powerful stories covered concerns Kitty Reynolds,

a First Nations woman who was brutally raped and beaten in Iqualuit, NWT.

After the attack, Reynolds moved to B.C. where she received a subpoena to testify. Surrey RCMP assured her that it was not necessary to return to Iqualuit because the rapist had confessed and the police had an eye witness.

Despite this, RCMP showed up unannounced and arrested her, taking her to testify in Iqualuit. In a horrifying and humiliating eight days Reynolds was paraded through six airports in handcuffs, and brought to the courthouse (still handcuffed) in a vehicle with the man who raped her.

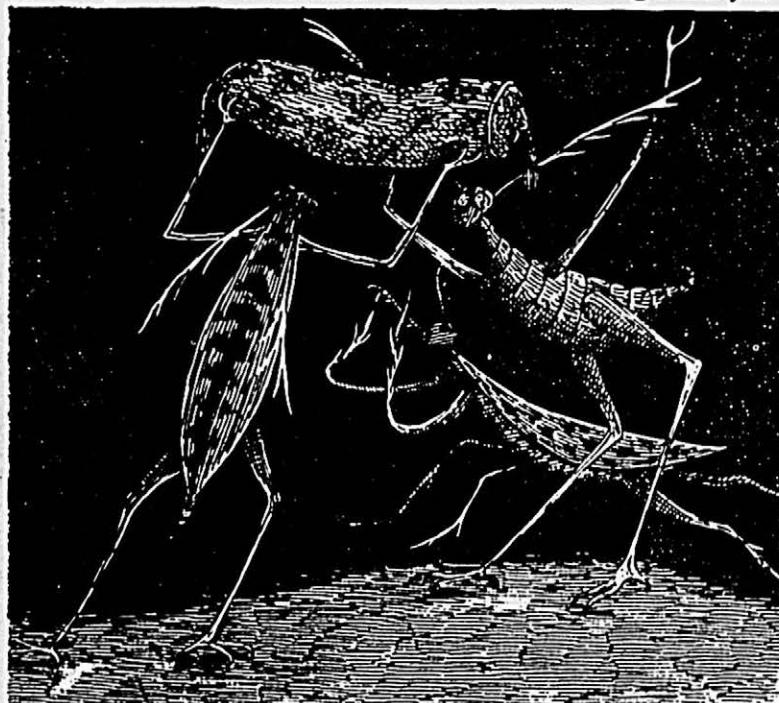
"I'm a victim of rape, I've never heard of people getting arrested for that...If I had been a white girl with money in the bank I wouldn't have gotten the treatment I got...What the authorities did, it's like I got raped all over again."

Surrey RCMP responded to a

complaint placed by Reynolds saying "no apology is necessary or forthcoming...We deal daily with arrested people and we treat them all like prisoners."

Unless there are spectacular events, mainstream media is screaming in its silence on First Nations issues. Jim Compton, in constructing this programme, had difficult choices to make. To allow for a broader coverage of issues, *Drums* had to sacrifice depth. Many issues were barely sketched out and not fully explored.

Drums presents a broad spectrum of issues concerning the First Nations, which can serve to encourage further investigation. Having First Nations journalists cover these stories provides coverage that, for once, is not tainted with the stereotypical assumptions and patronism which cloud 'regular' coverage. CBC is learning.



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1. Phycus
2. Various
3. Jackofficers
4. Front 242
5. Various
6. Artillery Men
7. Meat Beat Manifesto
8. Doughboys
9. Cassandra Wilson
10. Movement Rap Francophone
11. KMFDM
12. Etch
13. Various
14. Lounge Lizards
15. Seventh Fire
16. Oliver Jones
17. Loop
18. Great Kat
19. Ice Cube
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21. Tackhead
22. The KLF
23. Big Daddy Kane
24. Anthrax
25. Guy

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Hard To Believe: It's a KISS...
9G 12"
99%
Happy Accidents
Jump World
M.R.F. est arrive 12" Blast
Godlike 12"
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Guitar Paradise of East Africa
Voice of Chunk
The Fire Next Time cassette
Northern Summit
Prisma Uber Europa
Beethoven on Speed
Endangered Species 12"
In Dub
Strange Things
What Time is Love 12"
Taste of Chocolate
Persistence of Time
The Future

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MCA
Rough Trade
CBS
C/Z Records
Circularphile Records
Mute/
Restless Records
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Wax Trax/ Cargo
Oliver Sudden
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Lagarto/Fusion III
Maya Music
Justin Time
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Incredibly strange mixed-up zombies attack Paris

by Dan Robins

It started in Toronto. Crazed imaginings. Diabolical plots. Doctors with 5000 fingers. But next week, they're all coming to the Cinéma de Paris. What they'll do when they get there is anybody's guess.

One relevant anybody is Chris Holland. He's the one who collected these crazed imaginings, these diabolical plots, and all these fingers. He's the one who, with his B-

movie festival, is intent upon "conquering the world."

This will be the festival's third year in Montréal, but the first independent of the *Juste pour rire* comedy festival.

The genuine B-movies were those cheapies made during the '30s and '40s to lure people into double features. They also provided a training ground for new directors and actors, and even gave birth to two genres of their own: westerns and *film noir*.

But this B-fest stretches that definition a bit, and will include feature films made all the way into the late '80s. Holland said that, at least in the context of the festival, "B-movie" has become "a catch-all phrase for anything out of the ordinary."

The name actually came about as a joke: When the festival first appeared five years ago, it was in conjunction with the Festival of Festivals - definitely 'second' on the bill.

It is "a film fan's festival", designed specifically for the rep cinema crowd, who, Holland said, "demand something a little different."

It is for people who appreciate the history of film, and want to see some movies they may never have a chance to see again.

As for the program itself, "There's a real mix. You've got some schlock there, and there's some films with, I think, actual artistic merit."

Representing the schlock is *Plan 9 from Outer Space*, "a real golden turkey." It's often described as the worst movie ever, from the world's worst director. It starred Bela Lugosi of Count Dracula fame, which might sound like a meagre plus.

However, halfway through

shooting, Lugosi died. When he refused to rise from the dead, they had to get a replacement. Unfortunately, they couldn't find someone who actually resembled Lugosi...

Another golden turkey, and the movie with the best name, is *The Incredibly Strange Creatures Who Stopped Living and Became Mixed-Up Zombies*. This film has been known to provoke reactions of the *Rocky Horror* variety from audiences, and should be lots of fun.

More seriously, an uncut, and very high-quality, version of the Fay Wray *King Kong* will be appearing, as will perhaps the best B-movie ever made, *Detour*. There will be a salute to Ted Avery, who was "probably the best cartoonist of all time," juxtaposed with *Lord Love a Duck*, a bizarre satire of '60s California, written by George Axelrod of *Manchurian Candidate* fame, who also made his only sally into direction with this film.

There are also double-features, from the pair of *noir* films next Monday, to the "Bizarre Tales" on Wednesday. Several films are in 3-D, for which glasses will be sold. And then there's *Andy Warhol's Dracula*...

Of course, there's more to all this than just putting strange and wonderful films on one of Montréal's more interesting movie screens. There is a hidden purpose.

"We want to blow minds," said Holland. "We've actually hired a couple of people to clean up minds that have exploded..."

For more information, get a *Cinéma de Paris* schedule, available at the theatre (896 Ste. Catherine ouest), or call 875-7284. The festival runs from this Friday to a week Sunday. And since *After Dark My Sweet* played earlier this week, they'll no longer be playing that godawful preview.

EVENTS

Thursday 24 January
 La Clothing Sale. Union 107/8, 3480 McTavish. 9h-17h.
 Bake Sale for World Development Week. Union, Leacock, Burnside, Stewart Bio.

Blood Drive. To bleed, go to McConnell Engineering, 3480 University. 10h-18h.

"Dolomites and dolomitization: A never-ending problem" is a geology lecture by Dr. Joachim Amthor. FREE. FDA 349. 13h.

Tea and cookies after Ingrid Birker's Seminar: "Biological Recording as a Vital Museum Activity: Some Canadian Examples." FREE. Museum Auditorium. 15h.

Hillel House creative writing group open meeting. Info: 845-9171. 3460 Stanley. 16h.

Friends of First Nations is having a meeting to organize upcoming Native Awareness Week. All welcome. Leacock 738. 17h.

Hillel Book Club discusses Atwood's "The Handmaid's Tale". Info: Cindy 845-9171. Hillel House, 3460 Stanley. 18h.

A thief disguises self as a warlord in order to avert war in the Film Society's presentation of Kurosawa's "Kagemusha". Members and seniors \$1.00. Non-members \$3.00. FDA Auditorium. 19h30.

Student Council meeting in Union 309, 3480 McTavish. 19h30.

Irish poet, Michael Longley, reads. FREE. Arts Building Council Room 160. 20h.

McGill Savoy Society's production of "Yeoman of the Guard". Tickets at Sadie's and door. \$6.00 student, seniors. \$10.00 general. Info: 398-6820. Westmount Highschool Auditorium, 4350 Ste. Catherine West (Metro Atwater). 20h.

Eugene Plawutsky, piano and Martin Foster, violin play Mozart. FREE. Pollack Hall, 555 Sherbrooke West. 20h.

"The End(s) of Communism(s)/The End(s) of Capitalism(s)" by Jim Fleming. Galerie OBORO, 3981 St. Laurent, Suite 499. 20h.

Ongoing

The Pillar is not dead; drop submissions for the final issue of the semester at SSMU desk (Pillar mailbox) or 3479 Peel, 3rd Floor. Info: 398-4183. Deadline: 22 February.

Friday 25 January

MIT's Steven Pinker speaks on "Rules and Associations in Human Language". FREE. Info: 398-6105. Stewart Bio S1/4, 1205 Dr. Penfield. 15h.

Concordia films: "High Crimes and Misdemeanors" and "Dr. Strangelove...". FREE. 1455 de Maisonneuve West, Rm H-651, 19h.

Cult classic "Highlander." Film Society presentation. \$1.00 members and seniors. \$3.00 non-members. Leacock 132. 19h30.

"Yeoman of the Guard" See above. 20h.

Ongoing: see above.

Saturday 26 January

Screwed up artists in "Camille Claudel". A Film Society presentation with popcorn. \$1.00 members and seniors. \$3.00 non-members. FDA Auditorium. 19h30.

"Yeoman of the Guard" 20h.

Amnesty International Benefit Concert with Jason Fowler, Fall Down Go Boom, and more. Donation admission. The Alley, downstairs, 3480 McTavish. 20h45.

Sunday 27 January

"Yeoman of the Guard" matinée. 17h. Party follows "The Beat of Frances St.", a video about Vancouver squatters. FREE. Info: 987-1829, 259 Ste Catherine East. 20h.

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Quality typing services at low cost, on IBM PS/1 and HP Deskjet printer. Call at 685-6346.

361 - Articles for Sale

For sale: 1) unused 1989 Lotus manuscript set - all manuals and diskettes - \$100. (regular value \$450) 2) used electric sewing machine \$50. Call 849-0679 evenings; leave message.

Ibanez bass, fretless 'Musician'. Mint condition, with custom case. Neck-through-body, and passive/active pick-ups. \$500. Paul: 672-2515 (5-10 nights).

For sale: Double size futon frame. Women's leather jacket, women's skates size 9. Cheap cheap! Will take best offer. 281-2038.

372 - Lost & Found

Lost - Gold link bracelet Jan. 16. Probably in Lea, 132 or Curry Gym. Of great sentimental value. Reward offered. Please call 931-5409.

374 - Personals

Is your closet getting too small? Gays and Lesbians of McGill offers an information/counseling talkline. Call with questions, problems or just to talk. Phone 398-6822 or drop by Union 417 M-F, 7-10.

McGill Savoy Society presents: Yeomen of the Guard! Westmount High School Auditorium, 4350 Ste-Catherine W. January 24, 25, 26, 27, 31 and Feb. 1 & 2. Call 398-68201

Safe sex! Condoms with spermicide \$1.00. Diaphragm, spermicide at wholesale prices. Information - Women's Union, Room 423 Union Building, 11:00-4:00. 398-6823.

Anonymous, confidential, full of information and very friendly. McGill Nightline 398-6246. 6pm to 3am 7 nights a week.

383 - Lessons Offered

LSAT, GMAT and GRE preparation courses - Take our 20 hour intensive weekend courses prior to each exam. Tuition fee - \$190. For information call 1 800 387-5519.

Apply for medicine. Your grades, interviews, letters and even the new 1991 MCAT are all vital. Take the course that prepares you for each aspect. Call ... C-U-IN-MED.

Acting skills courses for film, TV, commercials, stage. Includes on-camera skills, script work, and improvisations. Beginners accepted. Limited space. National Film Acting School. Call 483-4555.

385 - Notices

Lesbian/Gay discussion group held Fridays at The Yellow Door Coffee House (3625 Aylmer) at 17:30.

If you need help sorting out your legal problems call or drop by the McGill Legal Information Clinic in January. We're here for you from M to Fri, 10-5 pm. • 398-6792 • Rooms B20, B21, B01B of the Student Union Building.

I'm a user friendly computer looking for a hardware person. Meet me at the Computer Expo in the Union Ballroom, January 30 & 31, 1991.

Is the cold getting you down? Well, don't frown. Go to Panama City Beach (Florida). It's not out of reach. Only \$219. Call Shakufé. 286-4497.

Oh, the joy of being submissive! Red Herring now accepting material of a comedic nature. Union 406, 398-6816 or we will find you ourselves.

At St. Martha's this week: Eric Mountjoy, Prof. of Geological Sciences and Ecologist. Sunday 10:30 am 3521 University (just above Milton). Informal, ecumenical community. Everyone welcome! 398-4104.

Audition February 22nd. Singer-Actor(s) Musical Revue. Call 487-1204 after 5:00 pm.

Editors needed now for McGill Undergrad Journal of History. Interested? Please leave your name and phone # in Leacock 625.

In The End: The Messianic Idea in Judaism. Mondays 2-3 pm, Medical Ethics in Judaism Mondays 8-9 pm, 6 week mini-courses beginning Jan. 28, Hillel 3460 Stanley; for more info call 845-9171.

Free dinner! Meet the sisters of Alpha Omicron Pi and find out what makes AOP different. Thurs. Jan. 24, 7:00 pm. 3505 Lorne. 499-0043.

T-shirt design contest For Animal Rights. Use up to 4 colours. Over \$75 in prizes. Deadline Mon. Jan. 28, 4:00. For details see poster or call META 345-5679.

389 - Musicians Wanted

Guitar teacher wanted (classical) for beginner McGill student. For lessons on campus or close. Music students with teaching skills welcome. Call Brian 286-1458 (leave message).

DIAL & SMILE

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7

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WANTED FOR positron emission research at the Montreal Neurological Hospital

We are presently conducting a brain imaging study and require healthy normal people for positron emission tomography scanning. If you would be interested in spending a day or two of your time please call us at the following telephone number ...

398-8932

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COMPUTER EXPO

Come see which computer you're compatible with.

WHEN?

On January 30th and 31st, from 10:00 am - 6:30 pm, COOP McGill will be holding a Computer Expo for all the students and staff of McGill University

WHERE?

The Student Union Ballroom.
3480 McTavish

WHO WILL BE THERE?

Representatives from various computer companies will be located at booths in the Ballroom.

SPEECHES AND CONFERENCES

Conferences will be held addressing some important issues in computer products & computer use. Everybody is welcome to listen.

FREE ADMISSION



COOP McGill, MacDonald Engineering Building
817 Sherbrooke St. West, room 278, tel. 398-5001.

YOUR NEEDS AND FIELD OF STUDY

The Expo offers a chance for all attendees to learn from experts just which computer system and software packages will compliment their field of study or type of employment.

TECHNOLOGICAL TRENDS

The event will be filled with valuable information on the latest technological trends in the world of computers.

COOP MCGILL

COOP McGill, the McGill student-run computer store will have representatives on hand, ready to answer questions about: computers, hardware, software, provincial loans programs, and of course about the cooperative.

NOTICE OF BY-ELECTION

For a VP Internal, PGSS

Eligibility: Nominee shall be a regular member of PGSS for the remainder of the term of office.

Terms of Office: From the present until May 31, 1991.

For a Graduate Senator (Professional)

Eligibility: The nominee shall be registered in one of the following degrees: M.Sc (Applied), M. Arch., M.L.S., M.S.W., M.B.A., or the diplomas of M.Ed., M.N., M.Eng. (Option B). Nominee must be a member of PGSS for the duration of the senatorship.

Terms of Office: From the present until May 31, 1991 (Senate meets Wednesdays at 2:20 pm).

Deadline for Nomination: Feb. 1st, 1991, 12 noon
Election Dates: Feb. 26 to March 1, 1991

Nomination forms and instructions available at the door of Thomson House or contact the CRO, PGSS at 398-3756.

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Michel (Meir) Abehsera is a world renown speaker on Jewish mysticism and kabbalah. He has studied the healing arts intensively (natural diet, acupuncture, etc.) and has authored several best-selling books in this field.

Friday January 25, 4:30 pm (lecture 8:00 pm)

Saturday January 26, 10:00 am

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Scarlet Key Award 1991

Nominations are now being called for the Scarlet Key Award which distinguishes those students who deserve recognition for their contributions to McGill aside from academic achievement. Excellence in leadership, effort and ability to motivate and involve others will be especially considered. Any student exhibiting such qualities while maintaining academic commitments may be nominated for the receipt of this honour.

Students or persons wishing to nominate a student may pick up application kits at Students' Society General Office, 3480 McTavish Street, Room 105.

Upon completion, application forms may be returned to the Scarlet Key Committee through Internal Mail at the Students' Society information desk. If your require additional information, please inquire at the Students' Society information desk or call 398-8288 or 398-4534 (The Graduates' Society).

The Selection Committee will review applications on a regular basis and will announce award recipients or invite applicants for an interview as appropriate.

DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 15, 1991

The Scarlet Key Society